



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OVER 300 FIREARMS REMOVED FROM THE COMMUNITY INCLUDING 66 MACHINE GUNS AND 5 SAWED-OFF SHOTGUNS - ATF CONCLUDES INVESTIGATION

WICHITA, Kan. — U.S. Attorney Eric Melgren and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Resident Agent in Charge Tom Atteberry announced today the conclusion of a one year investigation into the possession of illegal firearms in Butler, Sedgwick, and Sumner Counties.

This investigation began approximately one year ago when the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives received a tip from a concerned citizen. The investigation led to a search of **Phillip Ball's** residence at 809 Charles Avenue, Mulvane, Kansas. ATF agents found over 300 firearms at the residence including 66 machine guns, 5 sawed-off shotguns, numerous blasting caps, and over 100,000 rounds of ammunition. Two large trucks were required to remove all the guns and ammunition from the residence. The investigation continued until the beginning of October and led to two additional cases which were charged locally, one in Sedgwick County and one in Sumner County.

Melgren announced that **Phillip Ball**, 40, Mulvane, Kansas, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Wesley E. Brown **to three years probation and ordered to pay a \$7,500 fine.** The weapons were forfeited to the government.

Melgren said that Ball entered a guilty plea on July 18, 2003, to one count of possessing a machine gun. Ball admitted at his plea that he owned a large cache of firearms including the 66 machine guns and that he knew it was illegal to own the machine guns.

"This investigation removed a huge cache of illegal weapons from the community before anyone was harmed," Melgren said. "We are very pleased with the hard work of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in this investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Matt Treaster in this prosecution."